PEACE CORPS

volunteer

JANUARY 1967

Is TEFL Worth it?
Dealing with counterparts
Volunteers as social problems
Ambiguous roles in Tunisian Cities

The case against TEFL

More than a third of the Peace Corps Volunteers in the seven nations of French Africa teach English as a foreign language. An observer of the Peace Corps in Africa thinks they should be doing something else, and in this article he explains why.

By **DAVID HAPGOOD**

"With French and English you can go anywhere," a Peace Corps Volunteer teaching English in a French-African secondary school announced to his class and the class responded: "Who's going anywhere?"

It was an incident in the continuing debate over Teaching English as a Foreign Language in French Africa. (The region is usually called "French-speaking Africa", a misleading term since the great majority of people do not, in fact, speak French.) The Volunteer, an American optimist, foresaw that his students would one day be "going places" in the big, developing world. His students more accurately saw that they are not in fact going anyplace at all.

Students in the four-year secondary schools, where most Peace Corps English teaching occurs, face a bleak future that is only getting bleaker. The school population is rapidly increasing, but the stagnating economies of French Africa are producing few new jobs; cities are becoming clogged with a class of educated unemployed who are also largely unemployable — a boy who's been to school is not interested in going back to the farm.

In most French African nations, at least 75 per cent of the secondary students will drop out or flunk out before finishing the four-year course. Most of these dropouts are doomed to manual labor or unemployment. They have little use for French, the official —but not the national—language; in fact, many will forget the French they learned in school. English has no meaning in their lives.

Even among those who do graduate, only a minority go on to further education. The rest settle for a low-level, non-manual job, if they are lucky enough to find one; for in many places unemployment is creeping up on the graduates too.

For the luckier graduates, a typical job would be selling stamps in the post office. People in this position have no use for English either. When I hear the English language activists talking, I get a picture in my mind of that postal clerk reading *Profiles in Courage* on his lunch hour. This is sheer fantasy: he's a rare bird if he even reads the French translation.

Of those students who continue their education beyond secondary school, only a handful will have any particular need for English. It is a fair estimate that knowing English serves a useful purpose for no more than 2 or 3 out of 100 students in the schools where the Peace Corps is teaching it.

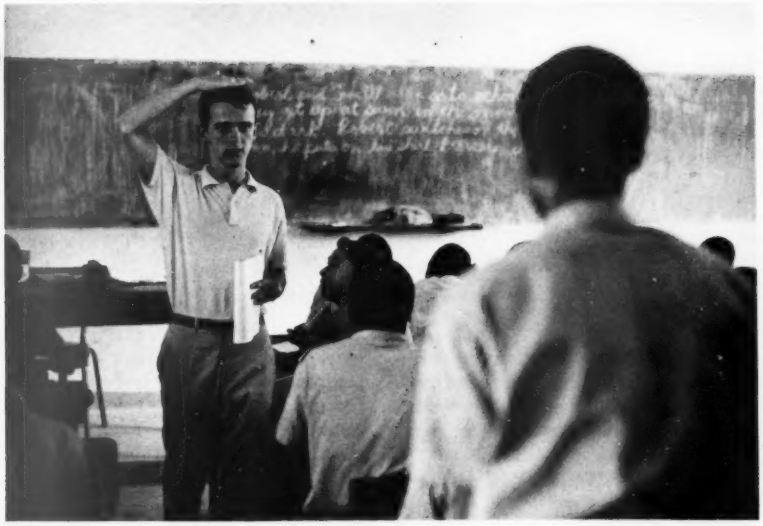
Teaching a subject to 100 students because a couple or even, for the sake of argument, 10 may find it useful is a waste of the student's time and of the Peace Corps' human resources, neither of which is unlimited. (Obviously, the time to teach English is when those 2 or 3 or 10 students have been sorted out, when you can put together a class of future airline hostesses, diplomats and hotel waiters.) The student, forced to do all his studies in a foreign language, French, is having enough language troubles without English. As quite a few Volunteers have pointed out, the crying needs of Africa, both in and out of school, make teaching English look like a pretty trivial occupation.

Many TEFL Volunteers are aware of the questionable value of their work. Termination conferences and evaluations have consistently found that Volunteers prefer other jobs when they are in countries where they feel there is a choice. (In places where there is no alternative, a Volunteer who says he would do the same job over again may just be saying: "If that's the only way I could get to Africa, I'd do it.")

The case for TEFL rests on shaky pilings. "African unity requires English" has relevance for a handful of diplomats and businessmen, not for the dropouts Peace Corps is teaching. "The African governments asked for

PEACE CORPS
volunteer
JANUARY 1967
Volume V Number 3
Published monthly by the Division of Volunteer Support, Peace Corps, Washington, D. C. 20525.
Stuart Awbrey, editor; Pat Brown and Bill Kinsey, associate editors; Jacqueline Blackmon, editorial assistant.

ON THE COVER: Inside the Grand Mosque at Kairouan, Tunisia. Volunteer architect Bob Mabry is assisting in its restoration. Teacher Kay Elquist looks on. On pages 16-19, Correspondent John Alden Rice takes a critical look at Peace Corps efforts in Tunisian cities, and architect Brooke Baker explores the contradictions of professional life in the Peace Corps. The Tunisia photos are by Carl Purcell.



The author says: "It is a fair estimate that knowing English serves a useful purpose for no more than 2 or 3 out of 100 students in the schools where the Peace Corps is teaching it." Above, an English class in a school in the Ivory Coast.

English teachers" is true enough, but this does not relieve Peace Corps of passing judgments on the request. (If this were not true, Volunteers would be building presidential palaces all over the world.)

"English is going to be taught anyway, and we can do it better" goes another argument. The curriculum is the Africans' business, in my opinion; but if Peace Corps agrees that English is of little relative importance in French Africa, then supplying free or cheap teachers is no way to discourage the teaching of English. Furthermore, it's questionable whether Volunteers do a better job of teaching students to translate into French, which is what the exam is about; and if the subject is useless, it hardly matters who teaches it more competently. "Maybe we shouldn't have gotten into TEFL, but now that we're in we can't get out," assumes that Peace Corps can never disentangle itself from an ill-advised venture.

Another line of pro-TEFL reasoning stresses the presumed valuable effect of the Peace Corps presence: "Must be good to have our Volunteers in there with those elite kids" (future cabinet ministers, etc.). Though the English itself may be useless, American values are to rub off on the African kids, either in class or in extra-curricular activities like sports or school gardens.

This is sheer speculation, and there is no evidence that anything at all is rubbing off on the African kids. In any case, I'd hate to be the person who has to say to the latest eager batch of TEFL teachers: "We know the job we're sending you to do is useless, but in your spare time. . . ."

A sad argument

Volunteers often put forward the saddest argument of all for TEFL: "Maybe they don't need English, but we're showing them what Americans are really like." Ask them what value this display has for Africans, as opposed to the U.S. State Department, and they have little to say. Yet these same Volunteers, a couple of years earlier, would have indignantly rejected the notion that they were going to Africa to make friends for U.S. foreign policy rather than to help Africans.

Despite the impressive case against it, TEFL remains numerically the most important Peace Corps program in French Africa. Even more difficult to credit is that Washington continues to give TEFL priority over its other operations in the region, which are far more promising. Advanced Training is reserved for TEFL, though it would be far more useful for other jobs. Selection gives preference to TEFL. Last summer TEFL was oversupplied with the cream of the applicants, while other programs were threatened with shortfall.

What gives TEFL this remarkable staying power? One reason, I believe, lies in our American obsession with education. We seem to believe that any kind of schooling is good, and therefore Peace Corps ought to wade into whatever is going on in education. But education is only the organized means by which one generation indoctrinates the next, and its value depends on the nature of that indoctrination. In Africa today, a growing number of people believe, most schooling does more harm than good.

The more immediate problem is that Peace Corps has not faced the realities of supply and demand. The right question isn't being asked in the debates over TEFL. Sending Volunteers into a marginal enterprise like TEFL in French Africa might be justifiable if Peace Corps had an unlimited supply of Volunteers and a limited supply of jobs—*if*, that is, the issue were TEFL or nothing.

But that is not the case. The demand for Volunteers already exceeds the supply. In French Africa, jobs are opening up rapidly for AB generalists (which is what almost all TEFL teachers are) in such fields as public health and rural development. These other jobs could easily absorb the entire supply of qualified applicants. (The point is sometimes made that applicants ask for English teaching. I question whether those liberal arts majors are dedicated to teaching, or whether they just think this is the only job they are qualified to do in Africa.)

If each AB generalist in TEFL means one less Volunteer in another job, the real question for Peace Corps to face is: given a limited number of AB generalists for French Africa, should they go into TEFL *or* public health and rural development, etc.?

Once the question is put in these terms, reason dictates the answer that the other jobs are more important than TEFL. The policy that should result is to phase out of TEFL (except for vocational English) with all tactful speed.

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Gross

Grennan

Freud

Wiggins

Churchill

Zeitlin

Toward a Peace Corps philosophy

— A REVIEW —

PEACE CORPS SEMINAR READINGS. *Edited by David Christensen. American Foundation for Continuing Education, Aspen, Colo.*

By **PETER PIKE**

These readings are designed to stimulate thought on the Peace Corps and its relationship to human development. They form a collection of articles and essays drawn from contemporary and historical sources and represent a wide variety of viewpoints on both man and the Peace Corps. The contributors range from Montaigne to Pope John XXIII to Peace Corps Volunteers. They should provide a basis for launching innumerable discussions —discussions which could as easily end up on the Peace Corps as on President Johnson or LSD.

These readings can play a role in the self-definition which is so badly needed if the Peace Corps is to develop into a truly revolutionary organization. Five years after its birth the Peace Corps is still racked by some very basic contradictions, centered around its schizophrenic responsibilities. The extreme diversity of Volunteers and motivations does not make this self-definition an easy task. Some are too involved in their work to worry about a philosophy. Some are not inclined intellectually toward philosophizing. Some prefer the present vagueness of the Peace Corps idea.

However, it is the thesis of this review that Volunteers must conceptualize their experiences in order to give their work an overall direction—not provided by such terms as "world peace" and "friendship." The resultant philosophy, albeit a nebulous one, could make the Peace Corps more effective by giving it more power in an ideological form.

Each of the ten booklets which forms the readings is devoted to a different theme. The standard discussions (the purpose of the Peace Corps, the techniques of training, and the aims of foreign aid) are included as well as more lively topics (the nature of freedom, the anatomy of peace and the meaning of cross-cultural experiences). The final booklet ties the various themes together according to each author's fancy and assesses the Peace Corps five years after its birth.

Volunteers have provided relatively few of the selections—a sign of the lack of Volunteer conceptualization. The absence of encouragement and a suitable literary organ are to be blamed for the lamentable dearth of subjective interpretations of the Peace Corps experience. However, the few Volunteer selections on cross-cultural experiences that are included are superb. David Schickele beautifully describes his gradual understanding of Nigerian cul-

The ten-booklet series of readings reviewed here are available as a basis for group discussions in the United States and overseas.

The booklets were developed by the American Foundation for Continuing Education at Aspen, Colo., under a contract with the Peace Corps. Copies and a study-discussion guide may be obtained from Sally Foley, Office of Training, Peace Corps, Washington, D.C. 20525.

David Christensen, a former Volunteer, researched and edited the readings, which were used at some training projects this year. The books will be used for discussion purposes on campuses among former Volunteers, faculty members, applicants, invitees and others interested in the Peace Corps.

Tillich

Swift

Mankiewicz

Montaigne

Scharfe

Kipling

ture. One suspects his assertion that in some ways he was more "intellectually alive" at Nsukka than at Swarthmore is true of many Volunteers. The letter from an anonymous Volunteer who returned early from East Asia vividly captures the unpleasant aspects of being completely misunderstood in an alien environment. His simple prose contrasts with his extreme mental turmoil. Unfortunately, he lacked a sense of humor. Albert Bradford's account of his participation in the Ati-atihan Santo Niño Festival of Aklan shows a Volunteer exploring his "heart of darkness": " . . . my mind alone could never grasp the meaning of the celebration."

These literary contributions are supplemented by short pieces by George Orwell, Joyce Cary and Elenore Bowen. These latter illustrate the unconscious cruelty of introducing one's cultural values into another milieu with the resultant tension, misunderstanding and insecurity. One feels that these literary creations carry a truth which objective rhetoric obscures. They present problems of ultimate values with which a Peace Corps philosophy must grapple, but which to date have remained almost untouchable, undiscussable.

Few observers understand the depth of self-questioning to which many Volunteers submit themselves. The Peace Corps is probably as often misunderstood by its advocates as by its critics. Indeed, this self-doubting can be frightening. The pieces by Humphrey, Wiggins, Wofford, Shriver, and Vaughn are all enthusiastic, challenging and, at times, radical; but they leave one with the impression that the depths of ambiguity in which the Volunteer finds himself are not fully appreciated.

On the other hand, the selections by David Riesman, Frank Mankiewicz, Richard Hopkins, Sister Jacqueline Grennan and John Seeley capture the spirit of restlessness among Volunteers, most of whom would probably agree with Seeley that ". . . the Peace Corps, as an educational institution, trembles . . . close on the verge of greatness." It has not crossed the threshold yet. Hopefully the process of self-definition will shorten the distance.

Why has not the Peace Corps begun to build a philosophy? What is the Peace Corps doing? Whom does it serve? The United States or human rights? The national interest or humanity? I do not want to suggest that these aims are mutually exclusive; but I would suggest that the verdict to this date does not indicate that they are mutually inclusive, as Al Ulmer's poignant letter from Selma dramatically illustrates.

Sobering thought department: *Blueprint for Peace* is a book containing the various proposals to the White House Conference on International Cooperation, edited by Richard N. Gardner. Only 1½ of its 405 pages are devoted to the Peace Corps.

No one has captured this ambiguous responsibility and the urgent need for its resolution better than Andrew Kopkind in his article in *The New Republic*. "The gap between the hope it (the Peace Corps) raises and its own performance is huge. Promotion of social revolution abroad . . . raises enormous questions for American policy. . . ."

Can the Peace Corps surmount that part of its origin attributable to the cold war? Can it become, as Kopkind says, "non-nationalist?" Evidence points to both a "yes" and a "no" answer. As Donald Scharfe accurately interprets: Volunteers have become "one-worldly civil servants." Will the Peace Corps then have to move to Geneva as Scharfe advocates or will the United States accept the challenge of a Peace Corps—a government-supported organization which will act upon American society in which, as George Johnson says, "there is often no community, in which the individual is powerless to affect his own life."

Many agree that after five years the Peace Corps has lost some of its initial spark and is in danger of becoming institutionalized, that the Peace Corps must define itself to become its own master, and that it must become a total educational experience. The selections from the *Educational Task Force Report* and *Cultural Frontiers of the Peace Corps* and, indeed, *Peace Corps Seminar Readings* themselves amply demonstrate that the problems have been recognized implicitly, if not explicitly.

Let us proceed then: Let us begin to interpret our experience to the world. Let us create a journal of Peace Corps interpretations, of poetry and of fiction. Such a journal could begin to draw us out of our individual experiences and show that we are not spiritually dead. Unlike THE VOLUNTEER, such a journal would not be burdened by the image-keeping function of portraying happy and busy, but essentially harmless, young Americans.

One gets the impression that people are afraid to take this step, to confront the American public. We have waited five years to extend the challenge. Karl Marx said, "To be radical is to grasp something at its roots." We have been called a radical experiment. But is this true? *Peace Corps Seminar Readings* show that we are reaching out. Let us grasp the roots.

Peter Pike, a graduate of the University of California, is a correspondent for THE VOLUNTEER *who is serving in Honduras.*

The Peace Corps Volunteer

as social enemy

number one

Alice was a bright and vivacious Volunteer. She was also a good teacher, and the supervisor at her school was delighted with her.

One day the Prime Minister and the Minister of Education made a tour of the school. Alice was asked to be their guide. She had a good time with both men on the tour, and the Minister of Education asked her to visit him in his office the next time she was in the capital city. She promised to do so, and one day she did. He was glad to see her and took her to lunch. When she was back at her site, she started getting personal letters from him. They were friendly letters and she enjoyed them. Her prestige in the school skyrocketed.

The Minister of Education scheduled another inspection of her school. He brought her an expensive gift—some local art-work of high quality.

Alice began to worry that she was getting in over her head. So far the Minister's behavior had been entirely correct, but she wondered what she would be able to do if his attitude changed. She decided to discuss the problem with Peter, a Peace Corps Volunteer at a nearby school. Peter had heard all about how she snowed the Minister, and he refused to take her seriously. He said he wished he were a pretty girl. He said she had a good thing going and should consider herself lucky.

What is the major social problem a Volunteer faces overseas? Aggressive host national men? High-living expatriates? Haughty diplomats? American soldiers? Hostile host national females?

Some 300 former Volunteers confronted that question this year and came up with none of the above answers.

Instead, they said—somewhat to their own surprise—the first villain on the Volunteer list of social enemies usually turns out to be another Volunteer.

My friend, the PCV

The returned Volunteers were sounded out on the subject by Barbara Boyle, a Peace Corps liaison officer, who reports that the majority felt that Peace Corps Social Problem Number One is a Volunteer's relationship with other Volunteers.

Miss Boyle, a former Volunteer in Tanzania, posed the question to the 300 men and women while they were being oriented to train future Volunteers at some 80 sites this year.

She said she first noticed the social problem question at spring training sites. "The girls would corner me," she said, "and ask about host national men. Among all the trainees there was a general lack of knowledge about social problems they would face as Volunteers."

Concerned that most training programs expended little if any time to social problems, the returned Volunteers began to discuss ways in which they might prepare trainees in this sphere. They started out talking about interpersonal relations between Volunteers and host country nationals and invariably ended up recalling incident after incident of problematic relations between Volunteers.

In one group, reports Miss Boyle, the dialogue went like this:

"If you guys had just helped us out once in a while," said a female to the men present, ". . . if you had just once escorted us home from a party, or cut in when you saw us having a bad time on the dance floor, or walked us to the bus stop . . . if you had just treated us like *women* . . ."

"We would have been happy to treat you like women," a male cut in, " if we had known that you *were*."

How the role of an American female is modified in a foreign culture received widespread attention. Could women expect to be treated as "one of the boys" in work situations and still expect to retain the privileges accorded them in their own culture because of their sex? All the women in the sessions admitted being faced with this quandary overseas, and the question was no less a problem for the men, who had often become unknowing culprits in the eyes of the women.

The former Volunteers explored other problem areas:

An intricate society

Should Volunteers congregate socially? When does hospitality turn into imposition between Volunteer hosts and Volunteer visitors? Is it the appearance or the reality of behavior that counts? What kind of support do and should Volunteers give each other? What kinds of roles do and should married couples assume toward single Volunteers?

Two Peace Corps women, Gail and Frances, were stationed in a village which was midway between two larger towns. Often Peace Corps staff and Volunteers who were passing through would stop and spend the night with the girls. At first the girls welcomed these unexpected visits as a break in their routine and as a time to unwind from the tensions of a foreign culture.

After several months Gail and Frances had become integrated into their village community, and they began to resent the invasion of their privacy which these unannounced visits presented. Work planned for the evening did not get done. In addition, everyone who stopped in assumed they were doing the women a big favor by staying at their house and breaking the isolation they must be going through. Moreover, the villagers began to view these visits by different "Europeans" as nocturnal adventures which were prohibited by the culture of the country. Uncharitable rumors always followed an overnight visit by Peace Corps members.

Finally, the girls felt that they could be a roadside inn no longer and wrote their associate director that they could not put up any more Volunteers or staff overnight. Three days later, Volunteers Jack and Charlie arrived at 7 p.m. after a grueling four-hour drive, expecting a good meal and a comfortable bed. Gail and Frances said very simply that they could not let the fellows sleep in their house since it affected their reputation in the village. The men were stunned and accused the girls of rationalizing their prudishness. Moreover, they continued, they were five hours from the closest hotel and Peace Corps Volunteers should help other Peace Corps Volunteers instead of all playing separate ball games.

Peace Corps Volunteers Sam and Ian had been placed in an isolated post. They were the only "Europeans" within 100 miles, so they quickly became the talk of the village and eventually the region. Wherever they went, they were greeted by people they had never seen before, but who obviously knew them.

The Volunteers used the novelty of their presence in the region to their advantage and made a great many friends. They were both included in many of the social functions of the village and after several months both of them were asked to help the community development worker in the village teach a class on health sanitation after they finished their regular work, which they also did jointly.

Sam and Ian were very compatible, but Sam began to realize that the difficult adjustment that was required when an American lives in a foreign environment is not an adjustment that can be made in tandem. He felt, although he didn't express it to Ian, that he hadn't really adjusted to the situation completely because Ian was always present to act as a buffer between the culture and Sam. At first this buffer had been welcomed, but now it was becoming more and more of a nuisance. Sam could see no way in a small village to break out of what was becoming a suffocating relationship with Ian.

The Peace Corps Volunteers had all been scattered over a large area for several months when they planned a party in one of the central towns. Many of them made an effort to attend, as it was to be their first get-together since they had arrived in the country.

Everyone came to town in a lighthearted mood, wearing good clothes and ready for a good time. Several of the women Volunteers had felt rather unfeminine in the last few months, and were pleased to find that they still could be flirtatious and coy. Joe also noticed their flirtatiousness, and immediately responded to what he considered very obvious signs from Sheila. Sheila, suddenly finding herself the object of a very fast advance, became quite indignant. "What makes you think that you can treat me in a different manner here than you would have treated me in the States?" she asked Joe.

All the returned Volunteers remembered specific situations from their overseas experiences which directly applied to these questions.

Many accused themselves and other Volunteers of insensitivity toward the problems of fellow Volunteers. Some said they hadn't been insensitive: they simply hadn't been aware that certain social situations were problems.

Others blamed insensitivity on the basic egotism of some Volunteers—these Volunteers went overseas with a specific idea of what they wanted to do there; they were competing with other Volunteers with different ideas or different methods; they were too caught up in the resulting jealousies to concern themselves with what they probably considered "extraneous" problems of other Volunteers.

The former Volunteers agreed that there are no ready, across-the-board solutions to social problems and that the Volunteer in the field must, in the end, make decisions regarding his relations with other Volunteers by himself.

Talks in training

But while most Volunteers do handle their problems alone, the former Volunteers suggested, it would have been much easier if there had been more sympathy and cooperation from other Volunteers.

To prepare future Volunteers to meet problems and, most of all, to be aware that problems exist, the returned Volunteers called for frank discussions at training sites about social situations overseas.

They emphasized that the discussions should take place in mixed groups.

Few Volunteers are in a work or social situation in which their performance does not have an impact on neighboring Volunteers, argued the returned Volunteers, and many social problems between the sexes stem from a lack of a frank exchange of opinion in the beginning.

To aid training discussions, the liaison branch in the Division of Volunteer Support produced a booklet of case studies and material to be used as a guide. Volume I treats relations among single Volunteers; Volume II, now being written, will cover relations with married couples in the Peace Corps. Some case studies from the first volume are presented above.

Photo by Katherine Muldoon

A new focus on the non-rules for Volunteer behavior

The question of how far the Peace Corps should go in regulating the social behavior of Volunteers is receiving increasing attention in the agency.

Many staff members and former Volunteers have raised the question in an attempt to clarify for present and future Volunteers and staffers the heretofore vague guidelines for social behavior overseas. The critics have challenged the traditional reluctance of the agency to spell out rules for social behavior.

The closest thing to a social regulation is a statement in the Peace Corps handbook which says: "The Peace Corps . . . expects your sexual behavior to be exemplary at all times. The Peace Corps says no more than this because we believe that as a responsible participant in the Peace Corps program, you will readily understand why the importance of your task overseas requires responsible behavior."

A many-sided policy

Critics of the one-page handbook statement note that its effect has been social regulation on a country-by-country basis, placing Volunteers under varying rules subject to differing interpretations. The result of this "non-policy," they say, is an injustice to Volunteers, particularly those who are sent home for not complying with what the field staff considers acceptable behavior. Director Jack Vaughn ran into some criticism on this score in Nigeria (see THE VOLUNTEER, December).

In an effort to clarify Volunteer attitudes toward regulations, a task force has been organized by the Division of Volunteer Support to collect opinions on what, if anything, the Peace Corps should do in making and enforcing rules about Volunteer social behavior.

Also, attempts were launched in 1966 by returned Volunteers to encourage more discussion of social behavior at training sites.

In the Peace Corps the term "social behavior" generally is used to cover such things as relationships of Volunteers with staff, host nationals and other Volunteers, and conflicts of value between host countries and the U.S.; specifically it covers such matters as the use of drugs, homosexual and heterosexual relations, unmarried pregnancy, abortion, and the availability and use of prophylactics.

A tentative verdict in favor of retaining personal Volunteer codes, as opposed to regulation, was reached at a recent Volunteer Forum at Peace Corps headquarters. A consensus of staff members, including returned Volunteers, who spoke at the meeting, was that how a Volunteer behaves socially in the host country is largely up to him, and should remain that way.

At the same time, comments at the meeting indicated that the Peace Corps does and should expect certain standards of social behavior from Volunteers. This was reflected by the statement of one staff member who said, "You're an American, but in a foreign country; you're responsible to yourself, and also to the Peace Corps." Another said the Peace Corps adhered to a three-part set of moral standards embracing a personal code, a host country code and a U.S. code.

Measuring impact

One participant summarized the ambiguities and inconsistencies inherent in Peace Corps considerations of social behavior by saying: "You can't tell people exactly what to do, because you don't know that much. You have to examine the possible and probable consequences of actions. You have to get people to think about the involvements . . . how will a certain kind of behavior be viewed and reacted to, and by whom? What kind of effect will it have, and on whom?"

Participants in the Forum asked for further discussion on the subject among Volunteers, trainees and staff. Some suggested that no aspect of social behavior should be labeled "undebatable" at training sites and in staff orientation.

At left, Volunteers try out Chilean dance at an impromptu party in a local bar. Below, Roosevelt House, the official residence of the U.S. Ambassador to India, who has invited Volunteers to receptions there and grants them access to his swimming pool.

Photo by Carl Purcell

Vaughn speaks out on draft

Director Jack Vaughn has affirmed that Peace Corps Volunteers are "second to no other Americans" in the service of their country—including soldiers in Viet Nam.

The director said that he was "ready to dispute anyone on that point, including 4,000 draft boards if it comes to that." His remarks were made at Logan, Utah, and followed the induction of two Volunteers who were called home from overseas assignments to be drafted.

The Volunteers, Philip J. Wagner and Fred Lonidier, were ordered home for induction from assignments in Peru and the Philippines, respectively, by the same local board in Butte County, Calif.

Vaughn noted that Lt. Gen. Lewis B. Hershey and the entire National Selective Service System have shown first-rate consideration for Peace Corps Volunteers, and that "local draft boards throughout the country have agreed overwhelmingly by classifying Peace Corps service in the national interest and deferring Volunteers until they have completed overseas assignment."

The speech, however, was made against a background of mounting pressure on Volunteers from a number of local boards. In the past six months, there have been an estimated 100 Volunteers who have not received the 2-A national interest deferment. In addition, at least 30 Volunteers who lost appeals at the state level have filed Presidential Appeals. Three Volunteers, including Wagner and Lonidier, have lost Presidential Appeals. At mid-December, an estimated 50 Volunteers were in various stages of the appellate process.

Vaughn's statement received wide attention partly as a result of the national debate on conscription and national service. Since either the current draft law must be extended or a new one must be passed by Congress this year, some Peace Corps members feel that the agency should take an

active and public part in the debate; they maintain that the Peace Corps should define its position and state it clearly. There is no consensus, however, as to whether the position should focus on the machinery of the present Selective Service System or on some broader concept of national voluntary service.

The director has said that he does not seek a change in Selective Service legislation and is "not sure what we can do" about the long-range problem "except to reiterate that what is needed is service to one's country." He added, "I suspect that some can serve better in the Peace Corps."

Meanwhile, the national commander of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, Leslie M. Fry, commended the California local board which drafted Wagner and Lonidier for "putting military service to our nation on a higher level than participation in civilian-type national service activity." Fry added: "It would seriously undermine our national security if participation in civilian types of service is equated with military service."

Chafkin starts firm

A top official of the Peace Corps has left the agency to launch a technical assistance company in which he hopes to employ former Volunteers.

Sol Chafkin, former head of the Office of Planning and Program Review, has organized a private firm in Washington which will design projects for the U.S. and foreign governments, and international lending agencies. He also anticipates employing technicians overseas at the operating levels of government, outside capital cities, at professional wages.

"It is very clear to me that experienced former Volunteers in certain fields can make a significant contribution in developing countries if they are utilized in significant numbers to accomplish a specific goal and are allowed to operate as a coherent, integrated task force in the field, rather than as functionaries in an office," Chafkin said.

Chafkin invites queries from former Volunteers or those completing service soon. Further information may be obtained from him through the American Technical Assistance Company, 1725 I Street, N.W., Suite 310, Washington, D.C.

'Second to no other'

Following are the director's remarks about the Peace Corps' role in national service, excerpted from a speech at Utah State University:

Let me make very clear that, in my opinion, there is no relationship whatsoever between Peace Corps service and modern war.

Peace Corps Volunteers cannot, do not, and will not grapple with anyone over their political destinies. Rather they share man's struggle with his oldest enemies—they share the battle against despair and confusion and disillusionment. They may lead but if they lead wisely—they will lead passively.

For as our own spirit is internalized—so they know that nothing will take root in the people whom they served which is not also internalized.

The battle cry in the modern war-over-man is: "Come, let me lead you."

Peace Corps service speaks another message. It says, "Come, let me learn about you, so that you can lead yourself."

Between the two, there is a millenium of difference.

To me, the Peace Corps Volunteer renders the most important service any American can offer to his own nation and to his fellow man.

This nation placed the individual at the focal point of destiny. Peace Corps Volunteers serve to keep him there.

I think our nation needs Peace Corps Volunteers second to no other Americans performing any other service for our country.

I am ready to dispute anyone on that point. Including 4,000 draft boards if it comes to that.

But it hasn't. General Hershey, and the entire National Selective Service establishment, have shown first-rate consideration for Peace Corps Volunteers. Draft boards throughout the nation have agreed overwhelmingly, classifying Peace Corps service as service in the national interest, and deferring Volunteers until they have completed service overseas.

Recently, we have had some exceptions. I think they are disappointing and regrettable.

Today, one out of every ten young men in the Armed Forces is serving in Viet Nam. Moreover, unless he is in action, the inductee joins all of the military potential of the United States—including nuclear warheads—as a deterrent, rather than a combatant. He is stored-up energy.

But every young man who is accepted into the Peace Corps after rigorous training and selection programs is on the job—an American actively serving his country—laying it on the line overseas for two years.

And then he is eligible for the draft when he returns home.

The Peace Corps is no haven for draft dodgers. Our psychologists are primed to spot them.

Still, let's face up to the ultimate issue: Some young men are being shot at—and others are being deferred.

I've searched my conscience severely for answers. And I think the answer lies in the minds of the men in Viet Nam. I come to this point of view, relying upon my own experience—for I've been shot at in anger, too—and more than a few times a minute, at that. Perhaps I am loading the question, but I believe that if I could ask our young men in combat a single question about the Peace Corps, it would be this:

"If it were in your power to defer, for two years, a qualified man whose service elsewhere might in some very small way lessen the chances of this kind of thing happening again . . . would you do so?"

I believe the answer would be "yes."

There are many other Viet Nams—developing nations where the will to self-determination and self-leadership is only faintly nourished in its infancy.

The people of every one of those nations ought to be at least as important to Americans as the people of South Viet Nam.

And Peace Corps Volunteers ought to be in those nations—not as part of anybody's "one-two" punch, but as a clear restatement of the care and good will of every American—fighting men included, and indeed, foremost among them.

The crucial ingredients of Volunteer impact on counterparts

by **PETER EASTON**

To most Volunteers, counterparts are the primary clients of the Peace Corps, and the host nationals they hope to work with most closely. How effective can a Volunteer be with his co-worker? How can he maximize his impact in two years? A Volunteer in Niger analyzed the counterpart-Volunteer relationship in an adult literacy program there, and arrived at conclusions that might be applicable to other programs. The author spent two years working alongside a Nigerién as a regional agent. Highlights of his report are presented here.

Given some training, given some time, nationals can run this country best. They know it better than anyone else.

But they know it, for the most part, in an immediate and unobjective way. Our counterparts are slow to consider their long experience of the way people think in village society, of the customs they follow and the situations they actually confront as a possible object of examination, or as an ingredient of policy making and administration every bit as important as modern techniques and new materials.

Consequently, they tend not to see the possibilities for sharpening government programs, for animating local society and easing its material burdens which the combination of a little technical knowledge and their own sense of indigenous culture offers. And they are inclined to apply development programs and administrative strategy borrowed whole from elsewhere without adaptation — then become disheartened when such preconceived projects don't work in a national setting.

One of our most important jobs is to help make conscious what for our counterparts is mostly unconscious— to get them to objectivize what they know about their own society and put that knowledge to use in answering the question, "How might we best educate the adults of this country?"

Peace Corps Volunteers have, on the average, several years more formal education than their national counterparts; they generally have more experience in teamwork and in organizational methods of getting things done; they are endowed, for better or for worse, with a work drive all out of scale with host national character.

As a consequence, the Volunteer will at times appear to himself to be more administratively effective and much better organized than his counterpart and will be tempted to take certain decisions into his own hands.

'The heart of the problem lies with us, and with our co

The temptation is frequently strengthened by the fact that everyone from the peasants to other officials seems to agree: the Volunteer *is* devoted and hard-working, he is carrying the brunt of the literacy service. But tread lightly. Our counterparts are the permanent fixtures in this country; we are only temporary ones. It may be worth a good deal more in the country scheme of things that they make hesitating and tardy efforts with mixed results than that we—granted it were possible — execute a few short-lived virtuoso performances. Beware on the second score. Peace Corps popularity is often founded on sandy ground: fascination with an American who speaks the local tongue, plus a residue of exaggerated respect for the European, and a habit of deprecating the African's capacity for disciplined work, ironically widespread among the Africans themselves. Our counterparts are the native sons and we are only guests. In a sense, until the population, from villagers to high officials, believes in its capacity to administer and lead, it won't really believe in its own capacity to follow and change.

At other times, a Volunteer will conceive imaginative projects for the improvement of the literacy program, and in the face of his counterpart's incomprehension and inertia, will want to take over and execute matters on his own. Such lonely downfield running can be an invitation to failure because Peace Corps Volunteers just do not know this country well enough to tailor projects to local needs and local possibilities all on their own. Also, a solo flight is often an invitation to failure because a successful project is by definition one which not only answers a felt need in the local environment, but which seems worthwhile to the nationals concerned, which catches their participation to the point that they finally adopt it themselves. Such a project, though it may be inspired and nourished by an American, must at some point bear a clear national imprint and answer to our counterparts' perception of the literacy situation.

In the primary task of helping counterparts to think actively about local needs, national program questions are often as good as suggestions, and human interest and continued presence on the Volunteer's part are the all-important elements. Thus new Peace Corps Volunteers, though they will spend most of their first year learning the ropes, can be of invaluable

This photograph of La Calle por Chol-Chol (The Road to Chol-Chol), taken by Volunteer Katherine Muldoon in south central Chile, won a

our conception of Peace Corps life'

service during their "apprenticeship." By willingly accompanying their counterparts on work rounds, by asking the reason for this and the way that works —both as concerns the machinery of the literacy service and the fabric of local customs—by accepting the decisions of their counterparts with singular concern for trying them out and honestly observing what results they give, new Volunteers can help nationals develop their own responsible and articulate style of work.

It seems common at the end of Peace Corps service to feel that one at last knows enough about local language, local customs and government machinery to be really effective the next year. But even novices can have ideas, and concerned and attentive novices can have very good ones, thanks to the freshness of their interest and perspective. After two or three months of work a Volunteer will be well enough acquainted with the country, and in particular with his own region, to have begun to apply his own habits of organizing a task, his own convictions about, let's say, the importance of local initiative, or his own skills to the problems of administering the regional campaign. And he will have some ideas and suggestions.

People in general are slow to absorb new ideas and are much more receptive to them when they are brought home by the force of daily evidence and repeated observation than when they are proposed schematically and point-blank. The remark is doubly true of our counterparts, who are not of a very theoretical turn of mind. In fact, one might say that plans proposed outright and in theoretical fashion by Volunteers are almost sure of negative reactions. On the analytical level, our counterparts tend to have a few very general and very solidly-held opinions. They are unaccustomed to the give and take of debate and to our manner of adopting an argument, testing it, then dropping it for a modified one. They feel uneasy in discussion, are inclined to interpret our shifting and questioning as an attack and to retreat to categorical positions. Once a Volunteer's proposal has entered this stale arena, the core issue at stake, which he saw so clearly through its theoretical phrasing, is soon lost to view and his chances of good communication with his counterpart are reduced to nothing.

The point is not that communications between the Volunteer and his counterpart are impossible, or that Peace Corps Volunteers should not take to the time-honored American task of thinking up better ways of doing things. It is simply that proposals must be advanced in a gradual and practical fashion and must be carefully blended with daily observations. To give more body to that statement, here is a sample technique which Volunteers in literacy talked over before the last campaign:

- Formulate your proposal to yourself, thinking of all the supporting evidence.
- As you do the rounds with your counterpart, point out situations which pose the problem you wish to address. Ask your counterpart's opinion on the causes, the exact nature of these situations. Recall similar instances seen elsewhere.
- Bring up your proposal in a by-the-way fashion (possibility that just popped into your head) and let it drop (that is, ferment).
- Continue observing, out loud but discreetly.
- Finally, bring up the problem and ask your counterpart just how he feels it could be remedied. He may well have given the issue some thought and be ready with a proposal or some comments of his own. Bravo! His ideas will likely be closer on target than yours. You can then question him about what practical form his solution would take. Or, if your counterpart has no suggestions on the spot, you may want to bring forth your own proposal, but in tentative fashion ("What would you think of this as a possibility?").

'Our counterparts are native sons and we are only guests. Until the population, from villagers to high officials, believes in its capacity to administer and lead, it won't really believe in its own capacity to follow and change.'

If the discussion bogs down, or if the two of you seem too little sure of the facts involved, better drop the matter. The next time around your counterpart may bring up the problem, and drive home the solution himself.

The tactic can be boiled down to: make suggestions gradually, attach them to live evidence, wherever possible let your counterpart give them final form.

Prompting, listening and working together are the heart—and the most

Chile, won a top prize for her in a Chilean photo contest.

It is better for a counterpart to do a bad job than for a

difficultly-achieved part—of the Volunteer-counterpart relationship.

It is dependent, I think, on four conditions:

REASONABLE COMMAND OF THE LANGUAGE. The criterion is the Volunteer's ability to express himself with relative ease and clarity on just about anything, which can certainly be done without an encyclopedic vocabulary and flawless grammar, but not without practice and the will to try—plus a bit of good humor.

However, all is not work in the Peace Corps experience, and I find that a degree of fluency in the native language is of great importance in revealing local culture to the Volunteer, in giving him access to people and teaching him to understand traits of local character (which, at base, his counterpart shares with the villagers) and especially, in making him feel at home. Work is consistently breaking down in this country, and a Volunteer who does not enjoy his surroundings will be much more frustrated, much more driven by a compulsion to work —and may well end up alienating his counterpart.

SELF-CONFIDENT COUNTERPART. This is something which a Volunteer cannot control nor too greatly influence, but to which it is well to be sensitive.

It is important, in a negative sense, not to upstage one's counterpart, not to be too insistent about one's own ideas for the improvement of the campaign. Abstinence on these points was much harder for me than I had expected, as I have been well-schooled in American drive and in our peculiar habits of one-upmanship and competition. I find myself covertly going all out to show that I am as competent as (if not more competent than) my counterpart, that I could run quite a show on my own and that I have some top-notch ideas about the reform of the campaign. Such antics would be safe and even proper in an American setting, where the rules of the game dictate that one's counterpart come back with redoubled efforts to go one better, so that the play moves faster and harder.

'A regrettable number of Europeans who know nationals only on the job come to the disillusioned conclusion that they are inveterate shirkers or just don't give a damn.'

It is worth noting that in the areas in which we unconsciously choose to compete—consistency at work, technical mastery of tools, orderly administration, public speaking and debate—we often as not have the goods on our counterparts. When we parade those goods too ostentatiously, when we launch out with too much vigor where our counterparts are not sure how to follow, they may simply wash their hands of the affair, with an attitude not unlike that in which their village brethren greet many a misunderstood development plan—"There goes the white man again amusing himself with another of his high pressure schemes."

To avoid such a situation, to preserve harmony and cooperative functioning in the literacy household, we are called upon to work out for ourselves some model of teamwork other than the competitive one with which we are so familiar.

GOOD UNDERSTANDING WITH COUNTERPART. Without saying that it is necessary, or always possible, to be best of buddies with one's counterpart (at times, a Volunteer and his counterpart will prefer to get away from each other after work), it *is* helpful to know and enjoy him outside the job, just to give the relationship an underlying human element which will survive the inevitable—and sometimes very severe —ups and downs of work.

Moreover, nationals can be very different people on and off the job, especially if that job is an administrative one in the Western style. Many do not feel at home with our way of scheduling tasks into an eight-hour day, of setting deadlines, of planning everything on paper and then reporting the results according to outline.

Few, as yet, are those who strike a productive compromise between Western styles of organization and their own less goal-directed, more personally-oriented dispositions.

A regrettable number of European technical advisers and residents who know nationals only on the job come to the disillusioned conclusion that they are inveterate shirkers or just don't give a damn. That isn't accurate.

A Volunteer will discover that the same officials who seem a little vague and uncertain on the job can be the most natural and generous of hosts. Endowed with an enviable ability to take pleasure in company whenever, uncanny judges of human character, buoyed by their love of daily ritual through vicissitudes which would (and do) upset us much more—they have in general a much more confident and graceful style of everyday life, I find, than the average recent American college graduate. The real question, worthy of both a Volunteer's and his counterpart's attention, is how the discipline of creative and reliable work can be orchestrated into such an otherwise equable style of life.

'The real tasks are seldom as we originally conceive them . . . logistics are unpredictable . . . the constituent material of every successful program is the country's history, people and resources, not Peace Corps points of view.'

SLOW-BURNING ENTHUSIASM. Enthusiasm and a passion to get things done are among the characteristics which foreigners here identify most quickly in a group of Americans—particularly a group of Peace Corps Americans—who come with service aforethought. Unfortunately, I find that my enthusiasm has a tendency to exhaust itself in short blasts and is dependent on quick results visible to me. What the Volunteer needs, on the contrary, is an enthusiasm that spends itself slowly, that can bide time with-

or a Volunteer to do a good one alone

out losing its inner fire—an enthusiasm for the simple task of living a full, thoroughly conscious two years of one's life in an African community.

I feel that this country has a tremendous amount to teach Volunteers; but the lessons are not to be learned in a few days. They are half hidden under the country's harsh exterior aspect and are only to be had by daily absorption, and by the renewed will to look and to learn. I also feel that Peace Corps Volunteers can be of great assistance in the growth of rural development programs.

But the real tasks are seldom such as we originally conceive them, and our projects and plans are never realized just as we envisioned—first, because logistics are so unpredictable; and second, because the constituent material of every successful program is the country's history, people and resources, not Peace Corps points of view. Our proper participation requires suggesting, and then helping the impulse to be worked out by others; creating, but then submitting our creations to national criticism, modification, distortion or disregard—and all the time giving a subordinate's helping hand.

The forbearance and sustained energy that such a role demands will come more easily if Volunteers manage to keep a sense of humor about such things as the Ultimate Value of their Loan Contribution to this country. A perspective that has often stood me in good stead is one that a fellow Peace Corps trainee and I fell upon one day back at Southern Illinois University after some particularly bleak exposé on the obstacles to good work overseas. "Damn," we said, "if they can just find us a post where we won't do too much harm for two years, the chance to live in the country will be worth it." I do think that prospects are brighter than that, but the irony has often served me well.

An irony from training: 'If they can just find us a post where we won't do too much harm for two years, the chance to live in the country will be worth it.'

The heart of the problem lies with us, I think, and with our conception of Peace Corps life. If the halting help-along version of the Volunteer's job looks a little frustrating and burdensome (and at times it looks so to me), the fault is perhaps that we persist in regarding our stay in this country as two years of pure service—admixed with high adventure—whereas in fact it is much more like two years of everyday life.

That life can be very rich—and, at times, very exciting—if Volunteers wholeheartedly take a place in the African community, seek to know that world and converse with it as they would a new friend, and approach their job out of such a position of participation. On the contrary, life can become dry and exasperating if they wish only to do "international service," and see sights; and if they make themselves too dependent on consistent gratifications in their job.

It is awesome to think of the number of Western visitors—technical advisers and others—who end up really disliking this country because they limit their circle of contact to a tightly defined job. They do the job, and perhaps do it well; but the nationals neither understand what they are up to nor feel able or inclined to follow—and the Europeans concerned almost come to believe that the country is in a conspiracy of inefficiency and ingratitude against them. They do see strange sights; but they don't comprehend them; and the little warmth that they can have by gathering together and recreating conditions like home is only enough to make them long for the real article.

The best way, finally, to preserve a good work relationship with one's counterpart and to remain apt for all the patience and renewed energy that the role requires is to see the work itself in proper perspective—as just one part of your life overseas and as simply a means to give African life more reach and more simple majesty. That is a stiff order for Americans, given our dynamic and compulsive attitude toward work. But it is also an invitation to be with a people who have spent hundreds of years creating a manner of living, rather than a method of analysis. When one learns to take part in the whole daily range of their life—a harsh life endowed with a warmth, grace and simple majesty that we are privileged to share—and when one learns to draw the drive and patience for his work from that experience, he will at last have a chance of doing something significant, of effecting changes on the number one raw material of development: people, not the least of whom will be himself.

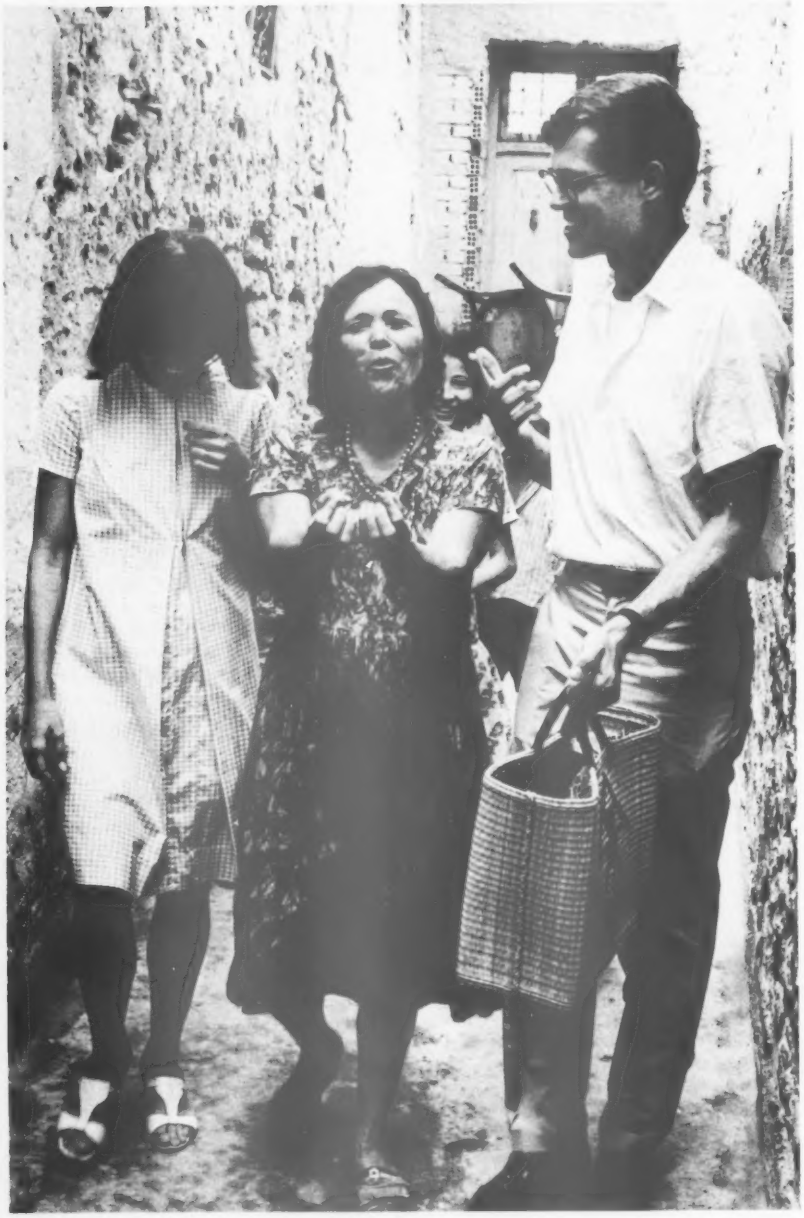
Peter Easton is one of a dozen Volunteers involved in adult literacy work in Niger. He was stationed in Madaoua for two years, and recently extended for another year.

Tougher at home

Is it tougher to be a volunteer in the United States? Yes, says Padriac Kennedy, an early-day Peace Corps official who is now deputy director of Volunteers In Service To America (VISTA). His view:

"Service in VISTA is even more difficult than Peace Corps service. VISTA assignments generally do not have that touch of the exotic that can add spice to a Volunteer's work, even when he is somewhat frustrated and disillusioned by his assignment. And that frustration can be doubly tough for the VISTA volunteer who is confronted with pockets of poverty in the midst of general affluence."

"Also, the Peace Corps Volunteer usually is faced with economic conditions that are more uniform throughout the country in which he is serving. The VISTA volunteer, on the other hand, is more often concerned with families that have known little but 'bust' for several generations while the economy around them has been booming."



City life: seeking a role between tw o

By **JOHN ALDEN RICE**

Gafsa, Tunisia

The good, square middle-class life is led by Peace Corps Volunteers who are engaged in middle-class occupations—such as English teaching or architecture—in Tunisia's cities.

Some deplore this. The Peace Corps, they argue, is abandoning its original ideals; it's beginning to resemble other agencies of the United States government and aid groups of other foreign countries. To preserve the old ideals, Volunteers have been urged by staff members to undertake as many projects as possible outside the routine of teaching or designing, especially projects which would involve some kind of "community development."

Perhaps more than in other countries where the Peace Corps works, Volunteers in Tunisia have been asked to limit luxury in their housing arrangements and the equipment they buy. And they are also occasionally reminded not to follow too closely in the footsteps of other foreign nationals. At a conference, for example, Peace Corps teachers were asked to discuss specifically what they were doing, or could do, to distinguish themselves from their French colleagues, both in living style and teaching method.

Many Volunteers, on the other

Volunteers Evie and Chris Lotze and a neighbor walk through the medina (the old walled city) in Sousse.

hand, see nothing wrong with their white collar jobs. They believe they have accomplished enough as teachers or architects, and may even resent attempts to make them feel guilty about their work. Their jobs, they say, do not permit them to work with common people at the mud-hut level as much as Peace Corps brochures depict.

Setting causes problems

Many of the difficulties with middle-class-level Peace Corps work lie in the urban setting where such work takes place. Volunteers may have more problems in the area of social life than in the jobs themselves.

The Volunteer's role in a Tunisian city is ambiguous and complicated, and he is tempted to withdraw from the complication by spending most of his time with a tight group of fellow Volunteers. "I'm scared of French people. They're so positive," said one female Volunteer who added that she had nothing better than a nodding acquaintance with any of her French colleagues. "Cold" is another adjective Peace Corps Volunteers might use to describe the French in Tunisia. And, indeed, coldness is no doubt justified from the French point of view, for the style of life of most Volunteers lacks the essential element of *elegance*. The Americans have no cars, they have trouble reading a wine list or discussing the virtues of a sauce, they hold their liquor badly, and perhaps worst of all, they make dedicated efforts to speak Arabic and to form close friendships with Tunisians, efforts which many Frenchmen look upon with distaste.

But seeking companionship among Tunisians, even middle class Tunisian colleagues, is usually as difficult or more difficult than seeking them among the French. Language barriers and lack of common interests and backgrounds, the problems which beset Volunteers in all countries, make sustained conversation difficult. The economic barrier is just as serious. Volunteers, it is true, are paid the same salary (it is a salary, not a "subsistence allowance") as a Tunisian professor with the equivalent of a French *licence*. But this effort at equalization is largely cancelled by the tremendous advantages—book lockers, medical services, tax and customs exemptions, allowances—which the Americans get from their government. And reducing these benefits, or the salary, would do hardly anything to make friendship with Tunisians easier. No matter how few *dinars* a Volunteer had in his pocket, Tunisians, who have been to the movies and know that all Americans are rich, would consider him part of the wealthy foreign establishment until he somehow demonstrated otherwise.

There have been isolated shining successes in Tunisian-American relations, especially among Volunteers who make a dedicated effort to speak Arabic, the indigenous language. Mr. and Mrs. Chris Lotze in Sousse, who are among the small minority of Volunteers to live in the walled Tunisian quarter of their city, have made a wide circle of friends and acquaintances within their area, and have used their house as a study center for the area's students. The mayor of Sousse was so pleased with the results of their living arrangements that he proposed requiring all Sousse Volunteers to live in the Arab quarter.

A bold proposal

This proposal, if accepted by the Tunisia Peace Corps office, would result in a quite drastic change in present living arrangements. Now, most of the city Volunteers live in the European quarter and, practically without exception, they live either alone or with a fellow Volunteer. Only in the smaller towns and villages have Volunteers worked out living arrangements with Tunisian families or colleagues.

In Sfax and Sousse, Tunisia's second and third largest cities, a Volunteer's social life often revolves around visits to and from fellow Americans. Volunteers also see each other daily in chosen restaurants and cafes. "It becomes a bad habit which you can't break no matter how much you'd like to," remarked Lucinda Pratt, whose apartment in Sousse was considered a central visiting place by other Volunteers. On the other hand, life in Tunis, the capital city, is more anonymous. A Volunteer may see regularly only his roommate and one or two other Americans. And there are opportunities in Tunis for all sorts of independent cultural activities. One Volunteer played for a time in a Tunis orchestra. Another attends lectures on sociology at the University of Tunis. A third took Arabic lessons at a convent at the same time that she was learning to play the *nye*, a Tunisian wooden flute.

Many like city

City Volunteers are glad for these opportunities. A good many would ask: Why change? Volunteers' jobs in the cities, though they normally follow a routine pattern, have produced some impressive projects, worthy of a Peace Corps brochure. Margo Farrell in Tunis was director of a child day-care center for about 130 children of indigent working parents.

Bernie Benn, in Hammam-Sousse, has begun his own design school. Bob Immerman designed a successful group of public gardens and playgrounds in Sfax.

The city Volunteer, that illegitimate child of the Peace Corps, might yet be accepted into the Family. If he can continue to do this kind of worthwhile work, while somehow broadening his circle of friends, there is perhaps no reason to deprive him of his coat and tie.

John Alden Rice has been a teacher in Tunisia since September, 1965. He is a correspondent for THE VOLUNTEER. *His article was initially intended for the issue which treated "The Peace Corps in the City," but it arrived too late for publication.*

w o cultures

The professional in the Peace Corps is often a man with two hats, one for the job and one for doing it as a Volunteer. Can he wear both? An architect-turned-city planner thinks not, and tells why in terms of his experience.

For professionals, the search is harder

By **BROOKE BAKER**

Sousse, Tunisia

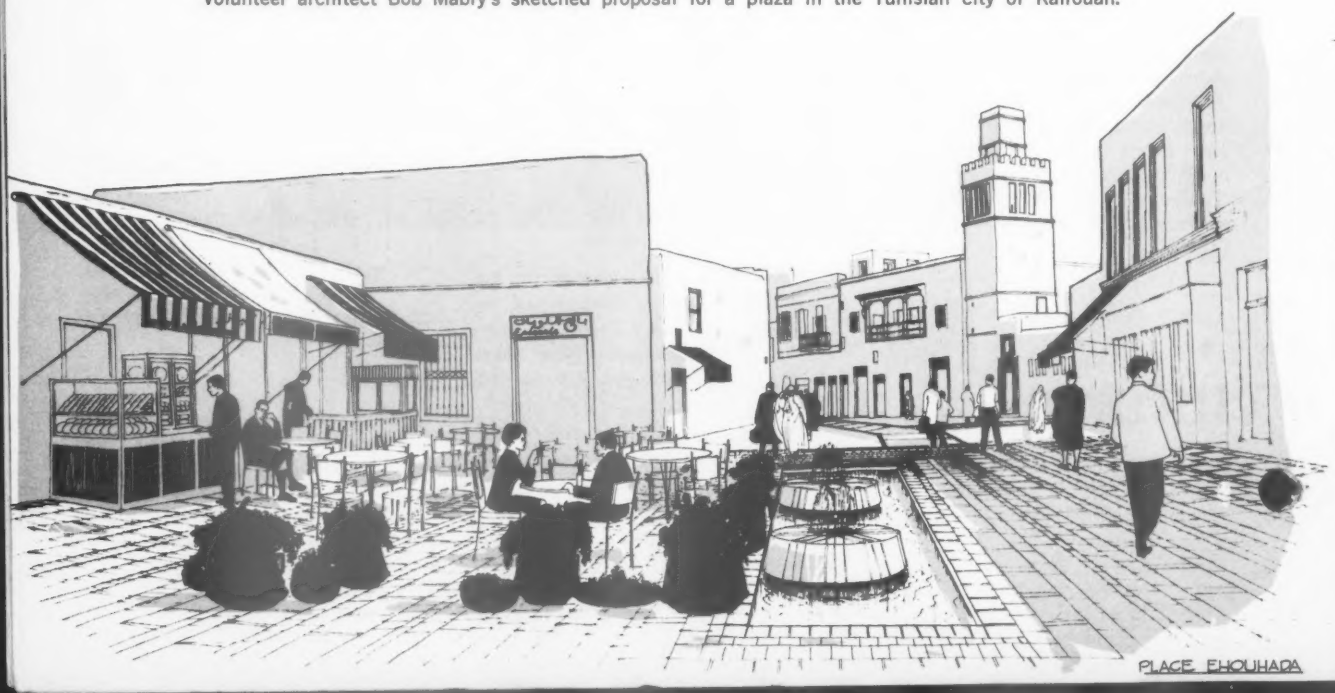
I am a city planner: professional, coat and tie, telephones, letter writing, conferences, designing, secretaries, office cars, just like in the United States. I have never dug a latrine; I have never even *seen* a latrine (dug, that is).

I wasn't always a planner. When I came I was an architect, but there was no work, so I took up planning, where there was work. I am about to finish a complete set of plans for the land use, street layout, and real estate policies of this city of 60,000, a master plan for Sousse, something the city needed badly and never had before. Its primary function is to avoid the urban chaos inherent in the present burst of hitherto uncontrolled growth, to let the whole be something more than just a pile of houses. So much for what I do.

There are almost no physical problems for me here in Sousse. I have the nicest living and working conditions I've ever had—hot water, gas stoves, balconized apartment, maid service, movies, and so on. *But*, that's not what I joined the Peace Corps for, and therein lie the considerable mental problems which are part of my situation. They may be summed up in three words: Who needs me?

The problems we (the city Peace Corps Volunteers here) attack are not the basic ones of health, food, rudimentary education; not the ones which give visible results per hour spent; not the ones the ads told us about. We're farther up on the curve of diminishing returns; the stuff we deal in is more sophisticated, less essential to the life of the body, much less visibly rewarding, and thus we are often bereft of that visible achievement (however small) which keeps other Volunteers going over the rough spots. I would

Volunteer architect Bob Mabry's sketched proposal for a plaza in the Tunisian city of Kairouan.



prefer physical privation to this constant effort at justifying one's presence as simply a money-saving convenience for the host government.

My own presence saves the government $4,000 a year—the difference between my pay and that of foreign technicians who do the same job. That's nothing, considering that the U.S. pays that same $4,000 to train, heal, ship, staff, and readjust me. The host government gets along without these luxuries fairly well, with little apparent discomfort on the part of the other foreign technicians.

Goals to go by

The basic problem is that we must keep trying to convince ourselves that the information-exchange objectives of the Peace Corps are enough to carry on, even in the absence of the objective of work which has fundamental utility. Either the Peace Corps has to enlarge its advertising image from the present latrine-digging one, or else it has to abandon these more sophisticated jobs. The conflict between the fact of the sophisticated job and the advertising which attracts a person with promises of more fundamental jobs is essentially harmful. Many good, hardworking, sensitive Peace Corps Volunteers consider themselves inadequate and useless because they're never able to dig a latrine. This is a direct result of misleading representation, and the major problem of city life in Tunisia.

I am sorry that the Peace Corps itself is the source of most of our problems in Sousse. Almost everything else is quite good: host relationships, work in sufficient quantity, cultural activity. But I always have the feeling that a proper employment agency could do the same here. And we would not bear this dual albatross of being "poor relations" vis-a-vis the other technicians and "rich relations" vis-a-vis the Tunisians.

The effect of this article is, I hope, reformist. Things could be good, but the Peace Corps will have to change to make them so. My own adjustment to the conflict has been to forget that I'm a Peace Corps Volunteer, and behave entirely as a foreign hired hand. I feel better that way.

Brooke Baker has two bachelor's degrees in architecture, one from Princeton University and one from the University of California at Berkeley. He recently completed two years as a Volunteer in Tunisia.

In addition to his work in the restoration of the Grand Mosque in Kairouan, the fourth holiest city in the Muslim world, Mabry (above in Mosque with teacher Kay Elquist) has drawn a series of sketches for architectural innovations in the old part of the city (see opposite page). Mabry's plan is to preserve the interesting, traditional elements of the medina such as Arab doorways and balconies. He sees a medina street as a progression of closed vistas, short turns, "surprise" views.

Do Volunteer nurses have realistic goals?

By CAROLE WATKINS

We nurses in the Peace Corps have to take a second look at ourselves—and our reasons for joining in the first place. After reading the results of the report published in THE VOLUNTEER (August, "Volunteers rank problems"), I begin to wonder just why the nurses have the largest "drop out" rate and why the majority are dissatisfied with their two-year service.

It stated that this may be due to our "higher professional expectations that are not matched by realized accomplishment, and hopelessness about the health needs of a growing population." Granted! But why do we arrive in the first place with higher expectations? What do we in the health field consider "accomplishments," and why this overwhelming feeling of hopelessness?

In training, we were told that there won't be the hospital situation as we know it—or any hospital at all—no health post or bandages or medicines, cooperation or interest. But when we do start working—from doing dressings to teaching first aid—we start looking for those "little rewards" that we went into nursing for in the first place. Those indefinable somethings called "gratitude," "recognition," a "feeling of being needed," or whatever. And when we don't find them—or when we don't recognize them for what they are, a part of another culture—we begin to lose our perspective for our whole purpose of being here.

What do we consider accomplishments? This, of course, would depend on what our expectations are, realistic or not. Before we set our sights for the horizon, let's be sure we see it clearly. Let's evaluate the total situation, not as it was given to us in training and not by what we learned of the area before we arrived, but as we ourselves see it right there in the site. Then we must decide what is most important. What can one person do in just two years?

When my partner and I arrived at our site, a town of 3,000 people, there was neither a furnished health post nor medicines, and no trained medical person. Approximately 50 per cent of all the newborn babies die before six months of age and adult mortality rates are high; the houses are filthy and the small children left naked; animals feed in the dusty streets and even the so-called "upper class" has no concept of preventive health measures and basic hygiene. Heavens! What can one person do? The people are far from that "point of readiness" to begin to grasp ideas of health and sickness. I doubt if there will be any drastic physical changes in the next two years, but sometime, maybe five years from now, some Volunteer will see something happen and marvel at his or her community development. This will be only part of the process, a process someone has to start somewhere. Getting this learning process off to a good start would be a realistic and realized accomplishment for this area, this country, at this time.

Why, then, a feeling of hopelessness? There is a phrase we nurses learn in school: "Attitudes are caught, not taught." Reversed, this can be applied to our relations with people of developing countries. They are born, live out their lives and die surrounded by these conditions. They have never seen anything change and never expect it to. The Peace Corps calls this attitude "apathy." I call it hopelessness. It's a very contagious disease. It can eat away at your determination day after day until there is nothing left and you finally succumb.

Nurses who have "high expectations" are especially susceptible and have to take preventive measures. I suggest simple, but serious, second looks, re-evaluations of your original goals. Were those goals realistic in the first place? Were they based on the facts as you found them at your site? Are your goals flexible (that magic word!) as you learn more about your site, its people and their way of life?

So, all I've done is raise more questions and haven't offered any solutions. We have a problem and I have a feeling it isn't just the nurses' problem. Re-evaluation is important in any kind of job, but in the Peace Corps, I don't think it can be stressed enough. I'm not saying it will solve any or all of the problems we run up against, but it will help us to know ourselves better and this comes first before we can understand others.

Carol Watkins is a nurse posted in Nazarezinho, Paraíba, Brazil.

Volunteer dies

Henry G. Shine, a 64-year-old Volunteer from New Britain, Conn., died of an apparent stroke November 30, in Enugu, Nigeria, where he had been assigned to a rural development and agriculture project for the past two months.

Shine, a former employe of the Stanley Company in New Britain, retired from his job to become a Volunteer. Prior to joining the Peace Corps last June, he traveled at his own expense to the Peace Corps training camp in Puerto Rico to observe training methods and to talk to trainees.

He is survived by a daughter and three brothers. Services and burial were in New Britain.

Calling all Pets

Wanted: Pet pictures and stories from Volunteers and staff members. The Peace Corps is collecting them for possible use in a national magazine article, and is particularly interested in strange pets or unusual anecdotes about ordinary types.

Close-up shots showing both pet and Peace Corps owner are preferred, in the form of good quality black and white negatives or prints (color slides acceptable if black and white is unavailable). Material is being collected by Carl Purcell, Office of Public Information, Peace Corps, Washington, D.C. 20525. All prints and negatives will be returned.

The staff of a current training program, having administered to the trainees the short-form Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory, next day found the following test in their mailboxes:

Personality Inventory for Staff Selection

(Committee for Re-evaluation and Assessment of Personnel)

name..... sex: yes..... no.....

This test will be seen only by the Committee after it is destroyed. The test hurts us more than it does you. It is for your own good. Besides, it is for your own benefit to help you decide if you are able. Be honest and sincere but don't think about the questions as you answer them. If you have any questions please feel free to call a meeting of all 90 trainees, with whom you may discuss your problems confidentially.

Autobiography. Please comment in thorough detail on the following:

1. Were you toilet trained?
2. Did you have any nasty experiences in the womb (that you can remember)?
3. Were you beaten often as a child?
4. Will you love your mother?
5. Do you feel rivalry toward your siblings even if you don't have any?
6. If you were breast-fed, did you resent not having orange juice?
7. List the ten childhood books which have influenced you most.
8. What was your worst crisis within the last month? How did you meet it? How would you meet it now?

Which do you prefer? Pick one:

Colliers or *Literary Digest*
Komsomolskaya Pravda or *National Review*

Which would you rather be? Pick one:

A florist or a hairdresser
A hunter or a ballet dancer

How do you feel about:

people with cavities?
like..... dislike.....

people who wear contact lenses?
like..... dislike.....

people who keep their rooms neat?
like..... dislike.....

people with only one nostril?
like..... dislike.....

people who prefer ice cream instead of beer?
like..... dislike.....

Answer the following True or False:

How is your feedback?

T..... F.....

Go immediately on to the next page. Do not pass GO; do not collect $100.

Answer the following Always or Never:

1. I am important.
2. I have trouble staying awake during seminars.
3. My bowel movements are just as satisfying as anyone else's.
4. Peace Corps fulfills my maternal tendencies.
5. I feel the world around me is unstructured.
6. My present affairs are satisfactory.
7. While on trains and buses and airplanes and ships I often talk to people who look very sensitive.
8. I like to plan things that other people can't find out about.
9. I believe in the second coming of Sargent Shriver.
10. Occasionally I feel like saying naughty words.
11. I think trainees are trying to get me.
12. Sometimes I feel like everyone is talking at once.
13. Girls only: When I was a little girl and we played house, I was the daddy.
14. I once got very excited!
15. No one around me seems to know what is going on.
16. My eyes don't blink as rapidly as other people's.
17. The sight of trainees neither frightens me nor makes me sick.
18. I gossip only for the good of others.
19. Whip-collecting doesn't appeal to me greatly.
20. I am sometimes.
21. People should be sincere whether they mean it or not.

Standard Form No. 4-F

LETTERS TO THE VOLUNTEER

Disagrees with Alinsky

To THE VOLUNTEER:

I have just read the D.C. training article (October) and was pleased to see that the trainees are now getting first-hand experience in community development. However, I was somewhat distressed to see that some of you have been working with Saul Alinsky, and I would suggest that you consider his previous work and methods before continuing to call on him for training purposes. Does the present Peace Corps policy agree with Alinsky's philosophy that discontent and even violence are the most effective ways of moving ahead in a community, that the ends justify the means? I certainly do not, and I would be happy to recommend other professionals whose methods might come closer to accomplishing our objectives as *Peace* Corps Volunteers.

O. J. SIKES III
Former Volunteer

Chapel Hill, N.C.

P.S. I wish you would push for better hygiene among Volunteers. I've heard some pretty derogatory comments from host country nationals about the personal cleanliness of Volunteers. We can and should at least keep ourselves as clean as national standards in the host country dictate.

Increase allowance

To THE VOLUNTEER:

Tanzania, along with other African countries, is currently in the throes of a readjustment of the Volunteer living allowance, ostensibly to bring it into more realistic agreement with what it actually costs to live here. While none of us is happy about the development, we are ready to accept the reduced figure because, in fact, the allowance has been slightly too high. However, if realism is to be the criterion for Volunteer finances, it is about time that a realistic look were taken at the readjustment allowance.

According to the Peace Corps handbook, the readjustment allowance, which has remained fixed at $75 a month since the Corps inception, is designed to ease the pain of reintegration into American society. Superficially, one can hardly argue with the static nature of the allowance for the past five years, because the cost of living has also been static, at least until recently. However, the cost of the thing to which 50 per cent of returning Volunteers return, namely higher education, has skyrocketed. The situation has become so trying that the University of California, for example, recently rescinded its long-standing policy against graduate fellowship holders taking outside employment, because available grants no longer suffice to meet expenses.

The only answer to this problem is an immediate increase in the readjustment allowance by at least 50 per cent. If this would require an act of Congress, as I suspect it would, then Peace Corps Washington should do some hard re-thinking about the impending living allowance cuts, so that the so-called "gravy" may continue to be socked away in the bank for purposes of post-termination education.

PHIL YAFFE

Mwanza, Tanzania

CHECK THESE EYES. *In the Peace Corps Portfolio they belong to two "Turkish" women. But former Volunteer Mike Jewell looked twice, blinked, and saw two familiar American faces behind the veils. Sure enough, they turned out to be former Volunteers Dorien Grunbaum and Susanne Amadon.*

A false image

To THE VOLUNTEER:

A photographic essay is a very powerful thing, the visual image leaving an impression that long outlasts the word. Therefore, the responsibility for the image presented should be taken seriously. It was not in your October issue in the portrait you paint for Colombia. It would have been better to present nothing than to allow limited material to misrepresent places people know of by name, if that. One purpose of Peace Corps, I would think, is to bring understanding, not distortion. This issue would insult any Colombian who might see it.

EARL KESSLER

La Plata, Huila,
Colombia

That was Jayne Mansfield

To THE VOLUNTEER:

I hope by now you realize the picture on page 31 of your October issue was a mistake. It is a tawdry and discordant note to close a beautifully illustrated issue where human dignity is stressed. Then you end on a note of fatuous hedonism.

H. GUSSEN

Washington, D.C.

Pleased with progress

To THE VOLUNTEER:

As ex-Volunteers of some two years, both my husband and I have been consistently following the activities of the Peace Corps through THE VOLUNTEER. We have been quite pleased with the continual progress the magazine has made from a very newsy, wordy, what-Ralph Right-did-in-such-and-such-place-type-magazine to a very personal, human expression of Peace Corps philosophy.

This has taken several forms: your concentration on the progress of one country's nationals and Volunteers, and your excellent portfolio edition.

Keep up the good work!

RAMONA and JON LOMAX

Los Angeles

Cartographer scores

To THE VOLUNTEER:

You've done it again. Sabah and Sarawak are only states, not countries, in Malaysia. The political situation being what it is in Malaysia, I don't think it is a good idea to go on acting as if they were separate countries as on pages 18, 19, 21, and 30, of the October VOLUNTEER.

Keep up the good work—the Peace Corps Portfolio was great.

JOHN BROMLEY

Kemaman, Trengganu
Malaysia

Creeping narcissism

To THE VOLUNTEER:

If Chile is a typical example, and I see no reason to suspect otherwise, there can be detected in the behavior of Peace Corps Volunteers, and Peace Corps' operations as a whole, a debilitating and ultimately ruinous trend —creeping narcissism.

Great emphasis is being placed on getting "organized," supposedly for the purpose of increasing the effectiveness of the Peace Corps Volunteer in his work situation. The staff is neatly arranged according to function and/or geographical necessity. There are all kinds of support, project assistance, and benevolent bureaucracy. At the Volunteer level we find such things as Volunteer leaders, area coordinators, regional coordinators, roving technical experts, specialists in cooperatives, and maybe experts on something like mothers' clubs. And of course there is planning: area planning, regional planning, planning among Peace Corps Volunteers in host country institutions, and planning to make plans. Everyone makes plans. People write reports, make out schedules, go to meetings, make contacts, make site surveys, drive around in jeeps, etc.

But one might ask, planning for what? Contacts and surveys for whom? Many of these activities seem to take place in a vacuum without purpose or direction. Are we spending more and more time planning, preparing, and getting organized and less time actually working toward concrete goals? Could it be that we are growing long on form and short on content?

And maybe we tend to react like the well-trained football player who, all fitted out with a clean uniform, is reluctant to get into real action and get dirty. Or maybe like the golfer who has good form swinging off the tee with the driver, some Volunteers prefer to use the big sticks of long-range or high-level community development, teaching, or whatever the case may be. But when the time comes to land on the green and take up a putter for the close-in work, we become sloppy and impatient. Indeed some are unable to fit the grass-roots putting game into their schedule because of the demand of reports, meetings, and sessions on the driving range, activities that all look good "on the record" in later life.

Perhaps without realizing it we do too many things just "for the record"

Memorandum

TO : The field DATE: January, 1967
FROM : The editors
SUBJECT: Arrivals, departures, and in-betweens

The recent arrival of the first Peace Corps group in Mauritania—13 Volunteers and 3 staff members—more than doubled the number of Americans in the African nation. The seasoned residents: six American Embassy personnel and their eight dependents.

□ □ □

When it comes to Peace Corps programming, "there are hawks and doves," said departing Planning and Programming chief Sol Chafkin of staffers who chart the Peace Corps course. For his farewell gift to the agency, Chafkin went shopping for one or the other of the symbolic birds, but found the stores fresh out of stock. Instead, Chafkin presented Director Jack Vaughn with a sleek, stuffed crow. Chafkin decided his third choice was best after all. "The crow," he said, "is larger than a dove and smaller than a hawk. It is noisy. It is clever. It is resourceful. Most of all, perhaps, it has a great capacity to learn, and therefore it is a fitting Peace Corps symbol."

□ □ □

Peace Corps staffers who regularly re-pack reference books which parents send to Washington for shipment to their Volunteer sons and daughters had a difficult time separating a stack of books recently. "They must have gotten damp," thought the staff member who was struggling with the five-book stack. With a hard jerk, the top book loosened, and revealed the surprising contents: a transistor radio neatly packed in the hollow of four books glued together. The bottom title: *Living Your Religion Series, Book One.*

□ □ □

A writer for The New York Times went to the Pocono foothills in Pennsylvania to do a story on a Peace Corps group training there for India. At the local pub, where the trainees occasionally practiced Gujerati, the writer asked the owner's wife what she thought of the Peace Corps. "Nice kids, no trouble," she said. "They come in of an afternoon talking funny." One of her customers was more opinionated. "It (the Peace Corps) don't do no harm. Don't do no good, neither," he said. "It's not for my kids. I guess it's O.K. if you don't have roots and a family to raise." The writer added: "He was looking fixedly at a card tacked up behind the bar which read, 'Caution. Be sure your brain is engaged before putting your mouth in gear.' "

□ □ □

Gleaned from Volunteer newsletters: *Ang Boluntaryo* in the Philippines reports this sign on the door of a Peace Corps vehicle there: "For Official Use Also" . . . *The Kriopolitan* in Sierra Leone reports that country director George Peach Taylor killed a 5½-foot cobra in his living room in Freetown . . . From Brazil, *PSIU!* presents a one-act play that's a spoof on Superman. Sample dialogue between major character TARK TENT (who is *really* SUPERVOLUNTEER) and friend:

TARK TENT: (thinking to himself) With my supersympathy I detect human suffering in a far-off corner of the world. (Speaking to LUCY LOOSEE) Well, Lucy, I'm on my way to a far-off corner of the world on a long assignment.

LUCY LOOSEE: Be sure to boil your water, Darling.

and have become overly involved with how we organize and present ourselves, always alert to how something will appear on paper and being easily satisfied if it looks good. Perhaps we are overly introspective and esoteric in everything we do and fail to ask whether or not we are effectively relating to the problems of the host country.

Of course it may be another manifestation of the idealism always just below the surface in the Peace Corps, or it may be an inevitable consequence of growth and bigness; but in the final analysis, creeping narcissism is a perversion of the legitimate needs of administrative and technical support and it is only of benefit to those who directly participate in the phenomenon.

I'm not a purist, and as an alternative I don't mean to spout the litany of mud huts, malaria, 16-hour work days, and a return to "the people." But I do think that Volunteers should not engage in any activity that will not directly and with all deliberate speed contribute to the achievement of a specific goal, whether that goal be a handful of people who can read and write, a new hospital, a better corn harvest, or a neighborhood improvement committee that meets once a week if only to talk about problems.

Creeping narcissism is a comfortable disease that makes us think we are doing more than we actually are simply because we go around and around in ever-increasing concentric circles—like a big wheel with an unstable center. Now is the time to recognize the futility of such behavior.

WILLIAM OGLESBY

Rancagua, Chile

On a road in Iran, the touch of a child

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

The question of what to do hangs heavy in everyone's heart upon encountering a tragic portrayal of human suffering. So often a truly sympathetic response to one in anguish is stilted by a certain amount of reserve and by the bewildering feeling of not knowing how really to help. On one such occasion, our two-year-old son, Joey, showed us the way with a child's magic spontaneity.

Everyday we wheeled our two children past a pathetic barefoot man who sat along the road with his pants rolled up, exposing a large, malignant ulcer eating away at his leg. He was a picture of utter despair—all alone and dying slowly from a vascular disease. We always greeted him and occasionally gave him something, but he never responded with more than a mumble and never smiled.

One day Joey jumped out of the stroller before we could stop him and raced right up to the man and shouted hello. He pointed his finger smack at the ulcer and yelled, "Look, mama—owie—look!" Joey bent down and peered into those tired, despairing eyes and questioned, "It 'urts?" And then, with his pudgy little hands, he drew the man's head forward and kissed him. For the first time, a big smile rolled over the man's face and glad tears glistened in his eyes as Joey toddled off after a butterfly.

DR. AND MRS. RONALD DUPONT

Tehran, Iran

Need permanent staff?

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

I question the philosophy of the five year flush. As a Volunteer, I have often wanted to consult someone concerning poultry. The host country officials and AID consultants are always willing to help, but they are also busy with their own full-time jobs. The Peace Corps staff, except for a few former Volunteers, seldom have the technical skills required. At any rate, the staff is seldom allowed to remain in their positions longer than two years—and always they are tremendously overworked. How and when can the system be changed for the better?

DAVID M. JONES

Korar Town, Mysore, India

Watch that yardstick

TO THE VOLUNTEER:

I wonder if Peace Corps is not spending too much time in self-analysis. We can set up "objective" standards of performance for ourselves, and can examine ourselves for our abilities to meet them, and Peace Corps can do the same for the Corps in general. Would it not be more consonant with the spirit of the Peace Corps, however, if the indication of our "goodness" were sought in the host country's satisfaction with us, and in terms of our contributions to the host country's ambitions and efforts?

Of course, the two standards are not mutually exclusive, but still, we may be getting excessively preoccupied with doing what *we* call "a good job."

C. A. KULE

New Haven, Conn.

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